



Rurouni Kenshin

SHONEN JUMP GRAPHIC NOVEL

Story & Art by

Nobuhiro Watsuki

volume

8



和月伸宏

NOBUHIRO WATSUKI



STUFF THAT'S GOT ME DOWN LATELY

SAMURAI SPIRITS: "ZANKIRO MUSŌKEN" (I WANNA PLAY IT). THE CAFE I GO TO (IT MAY GO OUT OF BUSINESS). DECLINE IN THE QUALITY OF THE PAPER AND PENS WE USE (VERY SERIOUS). MY LOVE HANDLES (EVEN MORE SERIOUS). HOW THE "RUROKEN" ANIMATION WILL TURN OUT (ANTICIPATION). THE DIRECTION THE "RUROKEN" MANGA IS HEADED (SUSPENSE). THE DIRECTION THE MANGA ARTIST "WATSUKI NOBUHIRO" IS HEADED (...).

HERE'S HOPING NEXT YEAR TURNS OUT JUST AS WELL...

Rurouni Kenshin, which has found fans not only in Japan but around the world, first made its appearance in 1992, as an original short story in **Weekly Shonen Jump Special**. Later rewritten and published as a regular, continuing **Jump** series in 1994, **Rurouni Kenshin** ended serialization in 1999 but continued in popularity, as evidenced by the 2000 publication of **Yahiko no Sakabatō** ("Yahiko's Reversed-Edge Sword") in **Weekly Shonen Jump**. His most current work, **Busō Renkin** ("Armored Alchemist"), began publication in June 2003, also in **Jump**.

RUROUNI KENSIN
VOL. 8: ON THE EAST SEA ROAD
The SHONEN JUMP Graphic Novel Edition

STORY AND ART BY
NOBUHIRO WATSUKI

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SHONEN JUMP GRAPHIC NOVEL

Rurouni Kenshin™

MEIJI SWORDSMAN ROMANTIC STORY

VOL. 8: ON THE EAST SEA ROAD

STORY AND ART BY
NOBUHIRO WATSUKI



るるに創

仲宏

A wandering swordsman or *ronin*, Himura Kenshin carries a *sakabato*—a sword with an inverted blade—to prevent himself from killing. But, during the Meiji Restoration, he gave birth to the Meiji Era. He inspired awe and terror as the assassin, Himura Battōshi. After exposing the “false Battōshi” at Kaoru’s Kamyū dojo, he became a samurai and a swordsmanship. Soon after, he and Kaoru were joined by Miyajin Yahiko, a young man Kenshin saved from the *yakuza*, and by Sagara Sanosuke, who was inspired by Kenshin to give up the lawless life of the professional braver.



Shinomori Aoshi



Seta Sōjirō

THUS FAR

A man named *Fujita Gorō* seriously wounds Sanosuke in combat and challenges Kenshin—at which time he reveals himself to be *Saitō Hajime*, former officer of the revolutionary Shinsengumi, now a spy sent by the police to test Kenshin's fighting abilities. As *Shishio Makoto* (the man who took Kenshin's place as *hitokiri*) plots against the government, *Ōkubo Toshimichi* (famous politician) requests that Kenshin travel to Kyoto and assassinate Shishio Makoto. Kaoru tries to stop him, but when Ōkubo is himself assassinated in broad daylight by one of Shishio's men, Kenshin sets out for Kyoto... saying goodbye only to Kaoru.



Himura Kenshin (Hitokiri Battōsai)



Myōjin Yahiko



Takani Megumi



Makimachi Misao



Kamiya Kaoru



Sagara Sansuke



Saitō Hajime

緋村剣心

（人斬り拔刀齋）

CAS T



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Meiji Swordsman Romantic Story

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LEAVING
WITHOUT
SAYING
A
WORD
!!!

OF
ALL THE
LOUSY...
THAT
SELFISH
BASTARD
!!!



Act 58—To Kyoto (Part I)

—AND
I'M NOT
COMING
BACK
TILL I'VE
BELTED
HIM!!

WELL,
THEN, I'M
GOING
TO KYOTO,
TOO—



Presenting the Results of the 1st
“Character Popularity” Contest!!



Act 58—To Kyoto

(Part I)

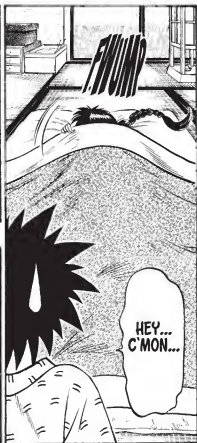






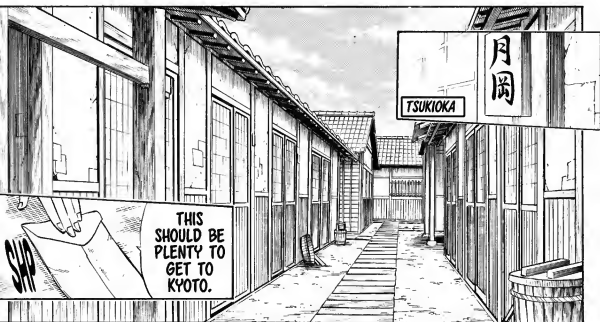
I UNDER-
STAND HOW
YOU FEEL,
BUT WILL
YOU PLEASE
JUST DIG
YOURSELF
OUT?!

THIS ISN'T
LIKE YOU!
EITHER GO
AFTER HIM
OR FORGET
HIM!



MAYBE IF
YOU TWO
DROPPED IN
TO CHEER
HER UP...

OF
COURSE.











...IS
NOTHING
BUT A
VULNERABILITY.

TO
BATTŌSAI,
YOUR
EXISTENCE...

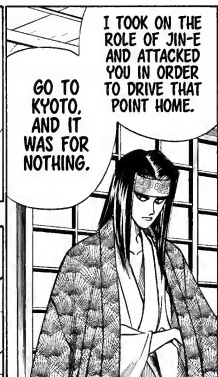


...



STAY
PUT IN
TOKYO.

DON'T
RUIN
THIS BY
FOLLOWING.



I TOOK ON THE
ROLE OF JIN-E
AND ATTACKED
YOU IN ORDER
TO DRIVE THAT
POINT HOME.

GO TO
KYOTO,
AND IT
WAS FOR
NOTHING.



...AND
THAT'S WHY
HE LEFT
ON HIS
OWN.

I SEE.
TO
KENSIN,
I'M A
LIABILITY
...

...



IF YOU
DON'T
MOVE, I'LL
MAKE
YOU!!



NO.
YOU
WILL
NOT.

MOVE,
SAITŌ!

NOW I'M
REALLY
GONNA
BELT
HIM!!

GOOD
TO
KNOW!

TP
TP
TP

YAAH!



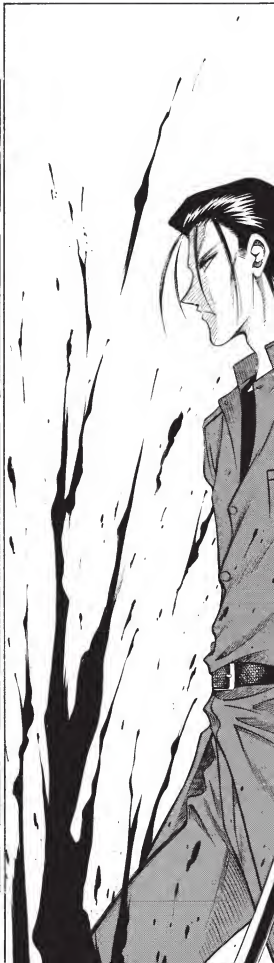
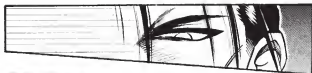
U
R
A
A
H!!

READ
THIS
WAY

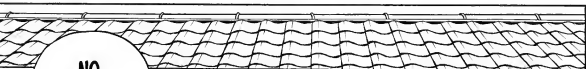








READ
THIS
WAY



PAIN
TAKES
TIME.





...BUT
THAT PAIN'S
NOTHING
COMPARED
TO
KNOWING...



...THAT
KENSIN
THINKS OF
ME AS
WEAK!!



GHHH
...



ZAN

I'LL SHOW
KENSHIN
WHAT A
"WEAKNESS"
I AM...

SO,
OUTTA
MY
WAY,
SAITŌ!

...I'LL
SHOW HIM
WITH MY
FISTS!

I'M
GOING
TO
KYOTO!



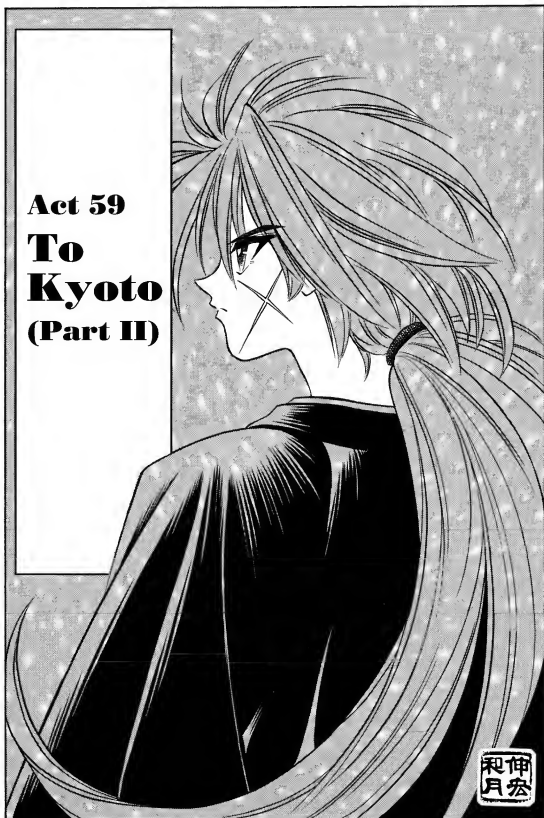
THEN
YOU SEAL
HIS FATE.

TSK

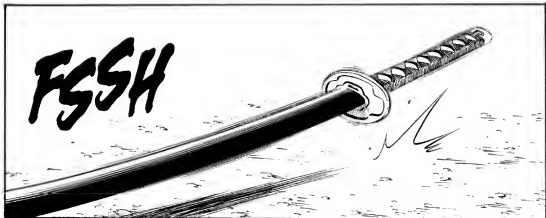
Rurouni Kenshin



Act 59
To
Kyoto
(Part II)











HERE!



**A FULL
SWING
AFTER
LUNGING.**

**A
FOOL'S
ONLY
TRICK.**

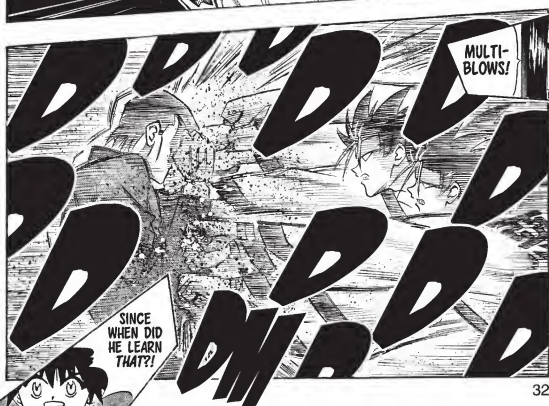


**RRAH
!!**



...WHO'S
THE
FOOL,
HERE!!

WE'LL
JUST
SEE...



MULTI-
BLOWS!

SINCE
WHEN DID
HE LEARN
THAT?!



...AND IF
YOU CAN'T
COUNTER,
EVENTUALLY
I BEAT YOU
DOWN!!

IF I
ATTACK
CONSTANTLY,
YOU CAN'T
COUNTER—

WITH A
SWORD, YOU
CAN PARRY
AND GO
STRAIGHT
TO THE
ATTACK...

...BUT YOU
CAN'T DO
ANYTHING
WHEN YOU
BLOCK A
FIST!



...IS KINDA
EMBARRASSING.

THOUGH I'VE
GOTTA ADMIT,
JUST THROWING
OUT THE
ODD PUNCH...



HUH.



《 READ THIS WAY 》

SANOSUKE
!



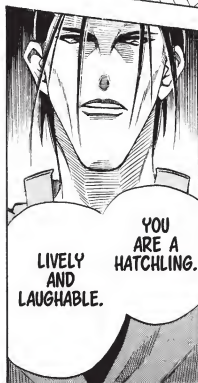
SO HOW
COME
MINE
DON'T
HIT AND
HIS DO
...?!

UNGH...THE
SPEED OF
OUR PUNCHES
IS HARDLY
DIFFERENT...



WHY
...??





YOU ARE A
LIVELY
AND
LAUGHABLE.
HATCHLING.



YOU
GET IT
NOW?

...OR
BATTOSAI
IN ABILITY
AND
EXPERIENCE.

YOU
CANNOT
APPROACH
ME...

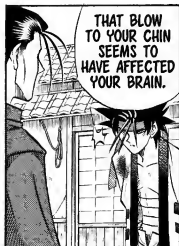


HE'S
GOOD.



HE'S THE
ONLY
ONE I'VE
EVER
SEEN IN
KENSIN'S
LEAGUE.

SORRY
TO SAY,
BUT YEAH.





HE'S NOT
HOLDING A SWORD—
BUT THAT'S STILL
THE *GATOTSU*
STANCE!



NO MATTER
HOW HARD
YOU FIGHT...



HE CAN'T.
HE'S BARELY
STANDING
AS IT IS.



THAT'LL
TAKE
YOU
DOWN!!



DODGE
IT,
SANOSUKE!

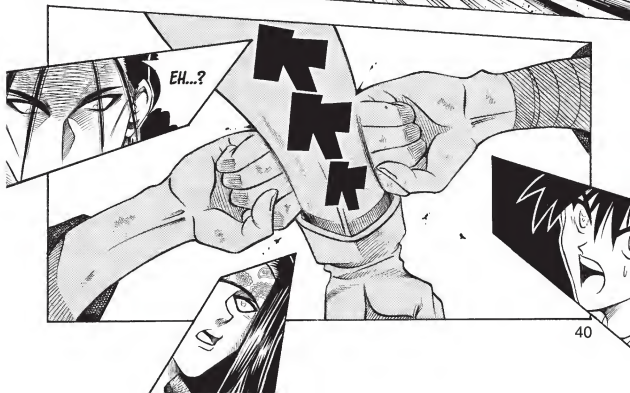
**NOTHING
MORE!!**

**YOU'RE
STILL A
HATCHLING.**





YOUR
POINT
BEING
??!



《 READ THIS WAY 》

YOU
...

HOW'S
THAT? LOOKS
LIKE EVEN A
HATCHLING...

...CAN
STILL
BREAK AN
ARM, HUH?

HEH

SO
WHAT
ARE
YOU?

YOU KEEP
CALLING ME
"HATCHLING."

TEN YEARS
AGO, YOU
WERE JUST A
KILLER
YOURSELF.

NOW YOU'RE
POWERFUL
ENOUGH TO
INFLUENCE THE
DIRECTION OF THE
GOVERNMENT.

I DON'T CARE HOW
MUCH EXPERIENCE
YOU HAVE, NEITHER
YOU NOR KENSHIN
WAS THIS STRONG
TO START
WITH.

...CAN GET
IN A
PECK OR
TWO.

EVEN A
"HATCHLING"
...







THAT
PUNK. WITH
ALL THE
PUNCHES
HE THREW...

...HE
DIDN'T
THROW ONE
AT MY
SHOULDER.



...FIGHTING
AT MY
LEVEL.

HE
LITERALLY
WAS...



BUT
WHAT
ABOUT
YOUR...?

I'LL
SEE TO
'EM ON
THE WAY.
JUST
GIMME
THE
MEDICINE
!

DAMN
IT!

I CAN'T
BE WASTING
TIME
AROUND
HERE! I'M
GOING!!



A
SHINSEN-
GUMI
CAPTAIN...

A "WOLF
OF MIBU."
THEY
CALLED
HIM. I
SEE WHY.

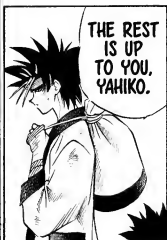


...AGREED!



...GET
THE LITTLE
MISS TO
KENSIN
SOMEHOW.

I DO
THINK
YOU'D
BETTER...



THE REST
IS UP
TO YOU,
YAHIKO.



I'VE GOT
TO BE
STRONGER
!!

A FOOL WHO
RELIES SO MUCH
ON HIS OWN
TOUGHNESS THAT
HE LEARNS
NOTHING OF
DEFENSE HAS
NOTHING TO
RELY ON.

WHY
DON'T
MINE HIT
AND HIS
DO...?!

...BEFORE
I GET TO
KYOTO!!

I'VE
GOTTA
FIGURE
IT
OUT...

Rurouni Kenshin



Act 60

Megumi's Feelings•Kaoru's Feelings

I
COULDN'T
CHASE
AFTER
HIM.



...THAT
PARALYZED
ME.

...BUT THAT
ONE WORD
FROM HIM...
"SAYONARA"...

I DON'T
KNOW
WHY...



...ALL I
CAN HEAR.

AND
THAT'S
STILL...

Act 60



仲伸
和月

Megumi's Feelings
•Kaoru's Feelings



...BUT
YOU CAN'T
JUST
WALLOW
LIKE THIS.

I KNOW
HOW YOU
FEEL,
KAORU-
CHAN...



...I
KNOW!

RUMMAGE
RUMMAGE

IT'S
TIME
TO WAKE
UP.



...**"HIJIKATA
TOSHIZO"** BY
NAKAJIMA
NOBORI.
THEY'RE MY
TREASURES!

GRIN

I'LL
GIVE
YOU
THESE:

"IBAHACHI"
BY
TSUNAN,
AND...



WHO
WANTS THAT
GARBAGE?



MY
TREASURES
ARE
GARBAGE.

"GARBAGE"
...



YAHIKO?!



HUH?

I'M
SHOCKED. I
THOUGHT
YOU'D BE
GOING TO
KYOTO.

LOOKING
AFTER
THE DOJO
ALONE?

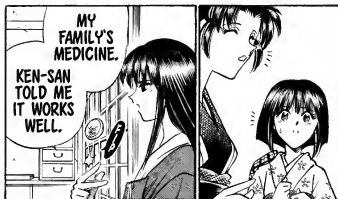


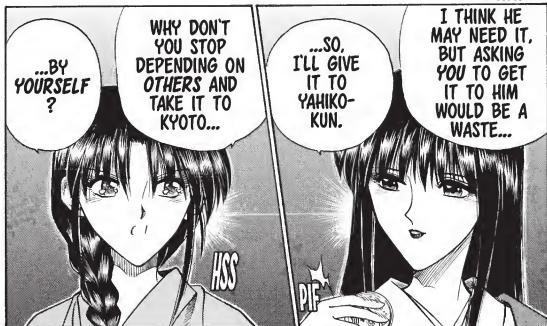


KLA TA!



**MEGUMI-
SAN!**





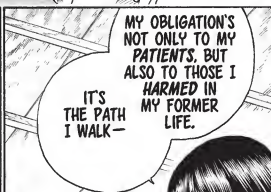
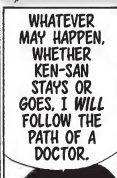


WAK



DON'T YOU MAKE LIGHT OF—

I'M THE MASTER OF A DOJO!



CAN'T ARGUE THERE.



YOU
ARE A
WEAKLING.

SNORT
AND YOUR ONLY
REACTION IS
TO CRY?



YOU
COULD
NEVER
UNDERSTAND
HOW IT
FELT...

...HAVING
HIM SAY
GOODBYE
TO MY
FACE!!



...YOU
CAN'T
UNDER-
STAND.

YOU'RE
RIGHT.



...KNOWING
HE LEFT...

...WITHOUT
EVEN
BOTHERING
TO SAY IT
TO ME?

BUT
THEN, CAN
YOU UNDER-
STAND...









—TO
KYOTO
?!

AREN'T
WE
GOING—



NO MATTER
WHO SAYS
WHAT, YOU'RE
OUR BEST
HOPE FOR
BRINGING HIM
BACK!

DON'T
YOU GET
IT? THAT
MEANS, FOR
KENSIN...

...PARTING
WITH YOU
WAS THE
HARDEST!

...AND, IN
EXCHANGE,
YOU'RE GONNA
HAND THIS
TO KENSIN!

GRP

MEGUMI'LL
TAKE CARE
OF THE
DOJO WHILE
WE'RE GONE...

KAORU-
CHAN!

I...

DO YOU
WANT TO
SEE HIM
OR NOT?!

ANSWER
ME,
KAORU!

KAORU-
SAN!!

I...!

DROP

DRIP

...REALLY
WANT TO
SEE HIM!

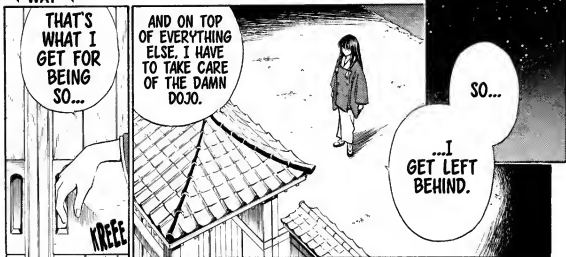
I
REALLY...

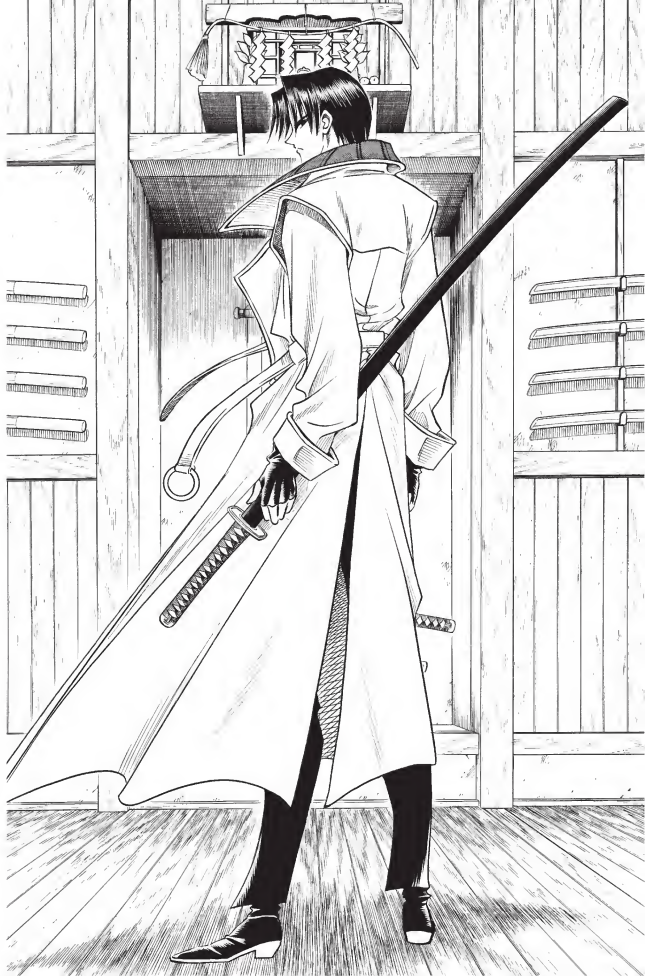
...I
WANT
TO
SEE
HIM.

LET'S
GO TO
KYOTO!

ALL RIGHT,
THEN. QUIT
DRAGGING.

TO
KYOTO—
TO
KENSHIN!







Rurouni Kenshin





Act 61

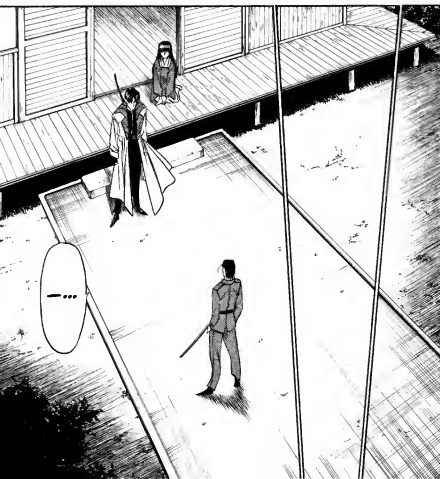
Man Without Emotion















STILL...
I WOULD
NOT CALL
IT OVER-
CONFIDENCE.

SUCH
CONFIDENCE.

YOU'RE
GOING TO
GET KEN-SAN
KILLED!

RRR!

WHAT DID
YOU TELL
HIM ALL
THAT FOR?!



YOUR
THOUGHTS
...

I
AGREE.

MMG!

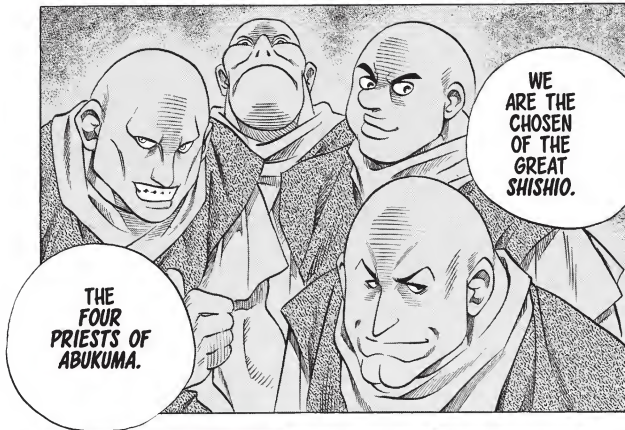
NOW, NOW.
IF I HADN'T
TOLD HIM,
HE'D HAVE
KILLED YOU.

I CAN
USE A
MAN
THAT
SKILLED.

A MAN DOESN'T
BECOME HEAD
OF THE
ONIWABANSHŪ AT
THE AGE OF 15
WITHOUT TRUE
GREATNESS.







READ
THIS
WAY

IF YOU'VE
NO OTHER
BUSINESS,
GO HOME.

AND
NEVER
RETURN.
THIS IS
MY LAND.

GO
BACK AND
TELL HIM
THAT.

IF HE
WISHES TO
MEET WITH
SOMEONE,
HE SHOULD
COME
HIMSELF.

...I WILL
SLAY YOU
ALL. SHISHIO
TOO, FOR THAT
MATTER.

IF YOU
THINK
TO CAUSE
TROUBLE
HERE...

PTUI.



...A
THOUSAND
DEATHS
!

...DE-
SERVES
TO
DIE...

TO SAY
YOU WILL
KILL US
IS INSULT
ENOUGH.
BUT THE
MAN...

...WHO
SAYS HE
WOULD KILL
MASTER
SHISHIO...



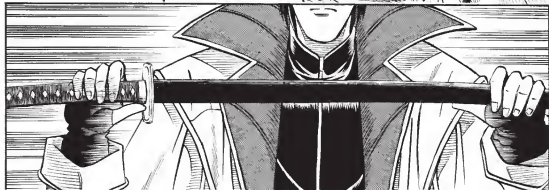
BE
CAREFUL,
FOOL.



NO
MAN
CAN
INSULT
THE
MASTER
...

...MORE
THAN
ONCE!!

HSH



...HE WON'T
BE ABLE
TO BLOCK
FOUR ATTACKS
ALL TOGETHER!

A
LONG
SWORD
...!!

WHATEVER
HE
WIELDS...

HAS HE
CHANGED
WEAPONS
SINCE HE
LOST TO
BATTOSAI?!



COULD
THIS
BE-?!

TWO
SHORT
SWORDS
IN ONE
SHEATH
!!



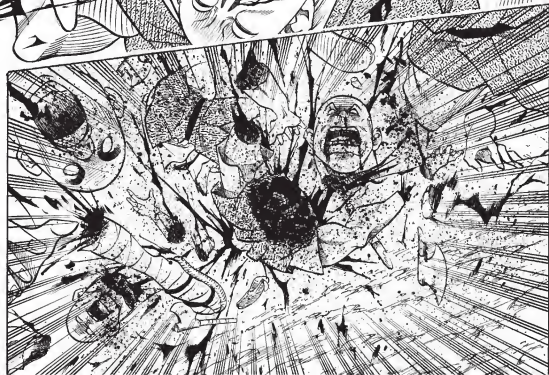
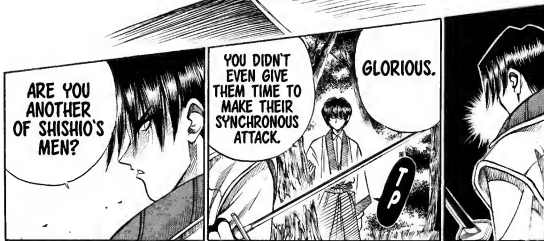
**"KODACHI
NITŌ-RYŪ."
THE DUAL
KATANA.**



ARE YOU
ANOTHER
OF SHISHIO'S
MEN?

YOU DIDN'T
EVEN GIVE
THEM TIME TO
MAKE THEIR
SYNCHRONOUS
ATTACK.

GLORIOUS.





YOU
IMPRESS
ME.

I HOPE
YOU ARE
WILLING AT
LEAST TO
COME
AND—

SETA
SŌJIRO.

FEW ARE
AS CLOSE
TO THE
MASTER
AS I.

YES.

I HAVE
NO NEED
OF ALLIES.

SAVE
YOUR
BREATH.

HOW COLD
IS THE
MAN WHO
SLICED
THEM
TO PIECES
WITHOUT
HESITATION...

...EVEN
THOUGH
HE KNEW
THEIR
PURPOSE?

STILL...

AH. SO
YOU
KNOW
ABOUT
THAT.

YES, THE MASTER
PUT THEM AT RISK.

ESPECIALLY
A MAN COLD
ENOUGH TO
THROW HIS
MEN AWAY TO
TEST ANOTHER'S
STRENGTH.





I LIKE
A WARRIOR
WHO CAN
CHOP MEN
LIKE
FIREWOOD.

I
LIKE
HIM.



...WE
SHOULD
GREET THE
FORMER
HITOKIRI.

I
SUPPOSE
...

NOW...WHAT
SHALL WE
DO NEXT?

BUT HE
WON'T BE
EASY TO
TAME.

HEH...



WELL
ENOUGH.



Rurouni Kenshin



Act 62—On the East Sea Road



WE'D BEST
KEEP OUR
DISTANCE,
JUST IN
CASE...





Act 62—On the East Sea Road



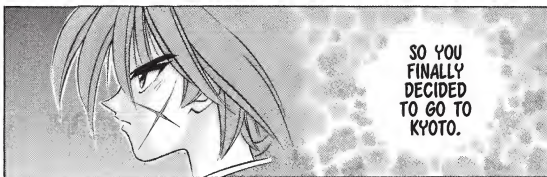
HSST!
HUSH,
NOW.

A
KATANA
!

SHH!

OH...

ZP



SO YOU
FINALLY
DECIDED
TO GO TO
KYOTO.



DID YOU
SAY YOUR
FAREWELLS
TO THE
KAMIYA
GIRL?

WE'LL BE
ALLIES IN THE
FIGHT AGAINST
SHISHIO. LET'S
ACT LIKE IT.

...SORRY.
NONE OF MY
BUSINESS.



MM. IN THE
WAKE OF OKUBO'S
ASSASSINATION,
KAWAJI HAS A
LOT TO
HANDLE.

I'LL BE
TAKING
COMMAND
IN KYOTO.

"WE"...?

DOES
IT
MATTER
?

YOU
DON'T
APPROVE
?



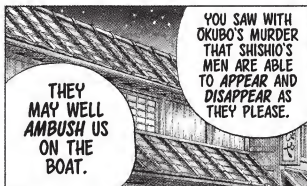
THIS ONE
WILL BE
TAKING THE
EAST SEA
ROAD.

NO.



THAT'S
NOT
IT.

WHAT, YOU
DON'T HAVE
THE FARE? THE
GOVERNMENT
WILL PAY—



THEY
MAY WELL
AMBUSH US
ON THE
BOAT.

YOU SAW WITH
OKUBO'S MURDER
THAT SHISHIO'S
MEN ARE ABLE
TO APPEAR AND
DISAPPEAR AS
THEY PLEASE.



IT WOULD BE
BETTER IF
YOU'D STOP
BEING SO
STUPID AND
BECOME
"HITOKIRI"
ONCE MORE.

YOU'RE
STILL
THINKING
LIKE
"RUROUNI."

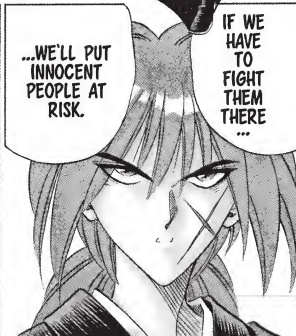
SHALL
WE GO
AT IT
AGAIN?



ANYHOW,
COME
WITH
ME.

TP

IF WE
LEAVE FOR
YOKOHAMA NOW,
WE'LL BE ABLE
TO MAKE THE
MORNING BOAT
TO OSAKA.



...WE'LL PUT
INNOCENT
PEOPLE AT
RISK.

IF WE
HAVE
TO
FIGHT
THEM
THERE
...



THAT
IS WHY
THIS ONE
ACTS
ALONE.

NO
ONE ELSE
CAN BE
INVOLVED
IN THIS
BATTLE.

USH

IF IT'S
A FIGHT
YOU SEEK,
YOU MAY
HAVE IT...

...BUT
THIS ONE
HAS NO
INTENTION OF
BECOMING
BATTOSAI
EVER
AGAIN.

JUST
DON'T
DAWDL,
ALL
RIGHT?

...

SHISHIO
HAS SPUN A
SPIDER'S WEB
OF INTELLIGENCE
ACROSS THE
NATION.

HE'LL
KNOW ALL
THAT YOU
DO.

IT WOULD
TAKE THE
AVERAGE
PERSON AT
LEAST TEN
DAYS...

...BUT FOR
YOU, FIVE
SHOULD BE
PLENTY.

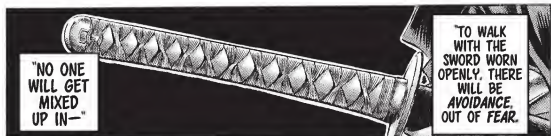
...ALL RIGHT.
IT DOESN'T
MATTER
WHICH ROAD
YOU TAKE,
SO LONG AS
YOU GET TO
KYOTO.

22



"...HAS
ALREADY
BEGUN."

"DO NOT
FORGET,
THE
BATTLE
AGAINST
SHISHIO..."



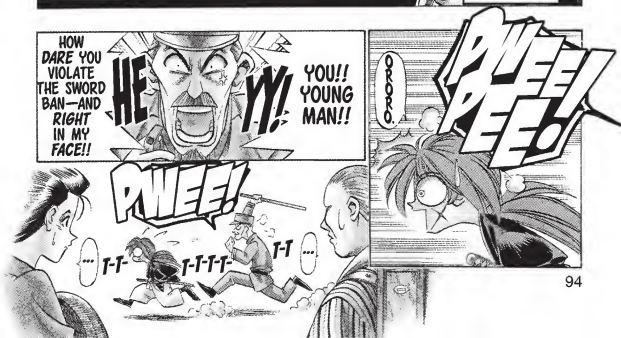
"NO ONE
WILL GET
MIXED
UP IN—"

"TO WALK
WITH THE
SWORD WORN
OPENLY, THERE
WILL BE
AVOIDANCE,
OUT OF FEAR."



HOW
DARE YOU
VIOLATE
THE SWORD
BAN—AND
RIGHT IN MY
FACE!!

YOU!!
YOUNG
MAN!!



HOWEVER, WITH THE FIFTH YEAR OF MEIJI, THE COMING OF RAILROADS HAS RESULTED IN AN EVER-SMALLER NUMBER OF PEOPLE TRAVELING ON FOOT.

EAST SEA ROAD
東海 道

STRETCHING NEARLY 500KM FROM THE JAPAN BRIDGE (NIHONBASHI) TO THE SANJŌ Ō BRIDGE IN KYOTO—THE EAST SEA ROAD (TŌKAIDŌ) HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT ROUTE SINCE ANCIENT TIMES.



PEOPLE REST AT THE INNS HERE BEFORE GOING ON TO HAKONE, ALONG THE MOST ARDUOUS PATH OF THE EAST SEA ROAD.

ODAWARA IS THE FIRST CASTLE CITY AFTER TOKYO (EDO).



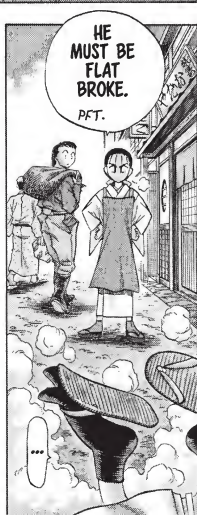
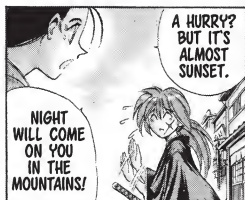
HOW ABOUT IT?

HEY THERE, SWORDSMAN!

GOOD PRICES AT ODAYA!

PLEASE STOP AT OUR INN, ODAYA!





READ
THIS
WAY

FSH

IT'S BEEN
A WHILE
SINCE THIS
ONE HAS...

SSH

WELL,
NOW.

...

**KRACKLE
KRACKLE**

...THEY'VE
EVERY
REASON
TO BE.

WORSE
...

...

...FURIOUS
BY NOW.

THEY
MUST
ALL BE...



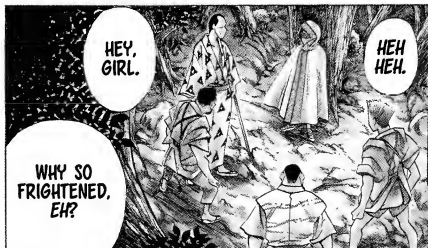
A GIRL'S
VOICE...AND
SEVERAL
MEN.

THEY
COULDN'T
BE
SHISHIO'S
MEN...



PEOPLE
MUST BE
AVOIDED...
...BUT THIS
CAN'T BE
IGNORED.

BANDITS...
OR
THIEVES.







HOLD
IT!!

GO HOME,
WASH YOUR
FACE, AND GO
TO BED,
KID.

SUCH A
SEXY VOICE,
TOO...SURE
RAISED MY
HOPES.



HUH,
YOU
BLIND
MEN?!

WHAT PART
OF THIS IS
A "KID"?!
RR



YOU...
YOU
BRAT!





GWAAH!

...I'M
16!!

I'LL
HAVE
YOU
KNOW
...



WATCH
YOURSELF,
KID!!



TAKE
THIS!



YOU
THINK A
MURDER
OR TWO
COUNTS
NOW??

WE'RE
ALREADY
WANTED
FOR
ROBBERY
!

READ
THIS
WAY

U...
WAH
!!

NO
MAN WHO
DEPENDS
ON
STRENGTH
ALONE...

...WILL
EVER BE
ABLE TO
CAPTURE
ME.

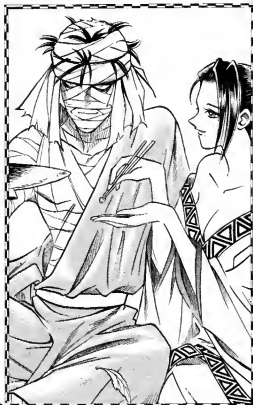
!!!







Rurouni Kenshin



Act 63

**M
a
k
i
m
a
c
h
i

M
i
s
a
o**





YUP.

SWORD...?



IF YOU RISK
CARRYING IT AGAINST
THE LAW, IT MUST BE
WORTH SOMETHING...



...RIGHT
?

WHOA
!



READ
THIS
WAY

THAT'S
MINE!!

GIVE
IT
BACK!

NOW I'M
MAD!



TAKE
THIS!

KANSATSU
TOBIKUNAI!

YAH!



THE CLOAK,
SURE. BUT THE
MONEY ISN'T
REALLY
YOURS. IS
IT?

GIMME
BACK MY
MONEY
AND MY
CLOAK!!



SORRY... OH...



AUGH!
MY
CLOAK!!



...

I STOLE
IT, SO IT'S
MINE!!

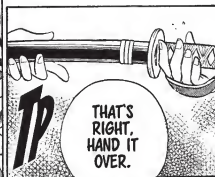


GIMME
YOUR
SWORD!
THEN WE'RE
EVEN!!

THE LEAST
YOU CAN
DO IS PAY
ME FOR MY
CLOAK!



ALL
RIGHT,
LET'S
HAVE A
LOOK...





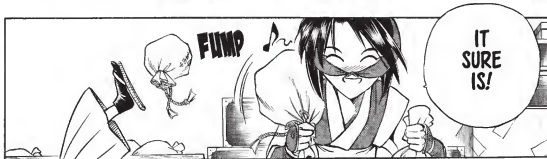
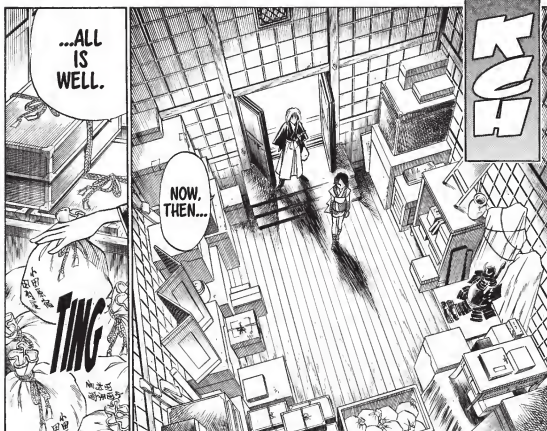
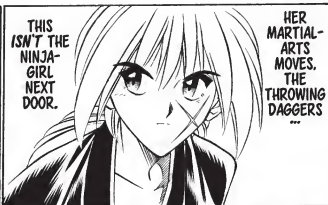
Long time no see! Watsuki here. I don't have the usual ball-point pen handy, so for today, it's fine-point. ...So, "Rurouni Kenshin" is about to be adapted to animation! I know a lot of people will object, and I understand the objections. I've had two or three favorite manga ruined by horrible artwork and storylines in the course of being animated, myself. But, for a manga artist like Watsuki—for whom the artwork is kind of "anime-esque" already—this is a dream. It all happened really fast, and the production schedule is tight, so I've got my worries...but please try and keep an open heart, and an open mind, all right?

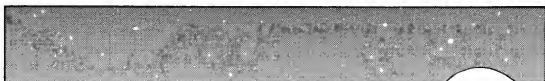
和伸
月宏

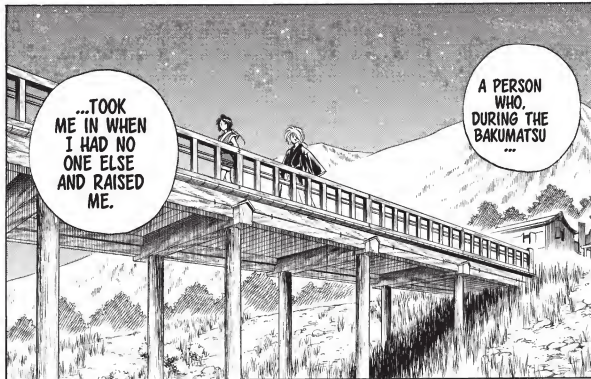












...TOOK
ME IN WHEN
I HAD NO
ONE ELSE
AND RAISED
ME.

A PERSON
WHO,
DURING THE
BAKUMATSU
...

...HE LEFT ME
IN KYOTO WITH
A FRIEND OF HIS,
AN OLD MAN.

AT THE START
OF MEIJI, WE
TRAVELED ALL
OVER, BUT THEN...



...WHAT,
MY
NAME? MISAO.

MAKIMACHI
MISAO.

AT
LAST,
THINGS
BECOME
CLEAR.
UH...

...UH
...

...I RUN
AWAY FROM
HOME TO
FIND HIM!

I WANTED
TO STAY
WITH HIM!
EVERY TIME
I HEAR THE
RUMORS...

BUT
EACH
TIME, I
FAIL!

MISPLACED
ANGER

GYOON

...SO YOU'D BETTER GET OUT OF ODAWARA AS SOON AS...

ANOTHER THING: THE MEN YOU ATTACKED PROBABLY HAVE YAKUZA CONNECTIONS...

USE IT TO SEND A LETTER TO THIS "OLD MAN" IN KYOTO, AND HAVE HIM COME FETCH YOU.

YOU HAVE THIS ONE'S MONEY, NOW.

OHH, YEAH!

THEN HOW AM I S'POSED TO GET HOME, HUH?!

STILL, NO MATTER HOW BADLY YOU NEED THE MONEY, YOU OUGHTN'T BE STEALING...

THERE THEY ARE!!



!
THEY'RE
ALL OVER!

TMTMTMTMTM

GET
OVER
HERE!

...NOW
YOU'LL
PAY!

YOU
WENCH
...

DM
DM
DM

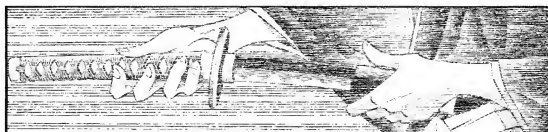
CUT
THEM
OFF!!

PUH-
LEEZE.

FEH.

THERE'S
ABOUT
30.
THINK
YOU CAN
HANDLE
HALF
SWORDSMAN
?

GNG



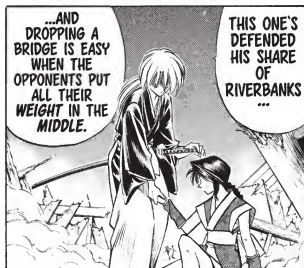
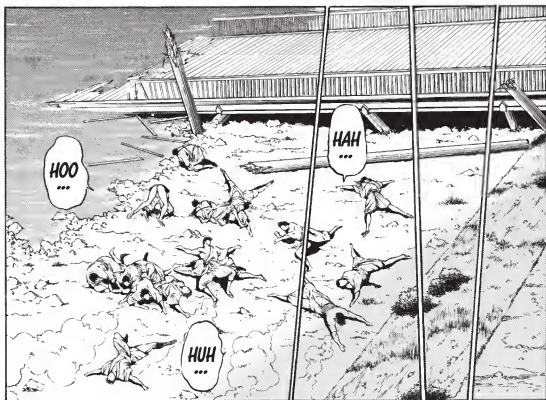


WHAT
SAY YOU
THIS ONE
CALLS IT EVEN,
AND PUNISHES
BOTH
SIDES...?

YOU'RE
ALL THIEVES...
AND SHE'S
A THIEF FOR
STEALING
FROM YOU.



GAH
!!!





...THEY
DEFENDED
THE ROYAL
EDO CASTLE
FROM THE
SHADOWS.

YEAH.
DURING
THE
BAKUMATSU...

"ALMOST."
HUH?

HEH



AOSHI-
SAMA, AND THE
ONIWABANSHŪ...
ONMITSU...?

I
WONDER
WHAT
THEY'RE
DOING
NOW...?



Rurouni Kenshin





SHINOMORI...
AOSHI...



Act 64—Playing “It”



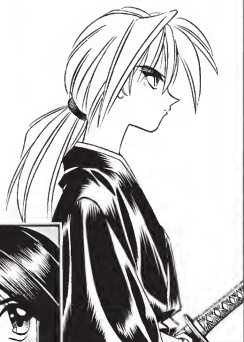
ARE
THEY
ALIVE
?!

WHERE
ARE THEY
ALL NOW?!
TELL ME!



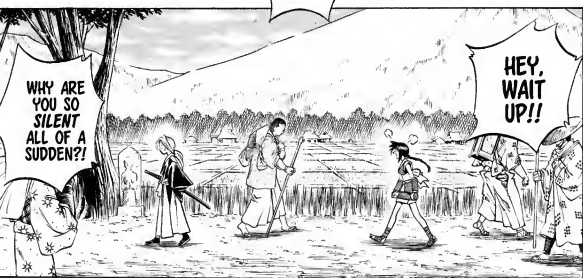
YOU
KNOW
HIM...?

Act 64



Playing “It”





ORO
?!

BO
OF

QUIT
JERKIN'
ME
AROUND
ALREADY!

...NO.

THAT
IS A
DIFFERENT
MATTER.

MMMM

WOBBLE
WOBBLE

WHERE
ARE
AOSHI-
SAMA
AND—?!

ANSWER
ME!



HE'S
THE FIRST
SOLID LEAD
TO AOSHI-
SAMA AND
THE OTHERS
I'VE HAD...!

HAKONE AHEAD

I WILL
NOT GIVE
UP!







AOSHI-SAMA
HIMSELF
WOULD BE
PLEASED TO
HAVE ME AS AN
ONIWABANSHŪ
KUNOICHI!

THINKS
I'M
LETTING
HIM
ESCAPE,
DOES
HE...?



I'M
ESPECIALLY
PROUD
OF MY
SPEED—





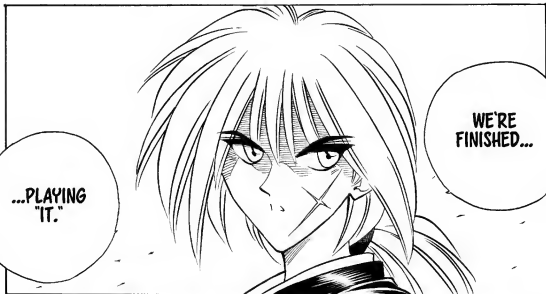
HOW
CAN HE
BE THIS
FAST?

THIS
IS NO
ORDINARY
MAN.



COULD HE
HAVE...FOUGHT
WITH AOSHI-
SAMA BEFORE?





...PLAYING
"IT."

WE'RE
FINISHED...



TILL YOU
TELL ME OF
AOSHI-SAMA
AND THE
OTHERS, I'M
NOT—

THINK
SO, HUH?!
WE JUST
GOT
STARTED!

MNG







GIVE
UP...

...AND
GO HOME
TO
KYOTO.

THE
DAGGERS
...

AH
...

...WITH
JUST
ONE
SWING
...

UH
...



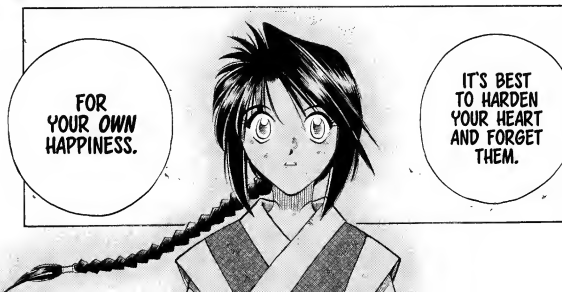


...IF YOU
JOIN THE
ONIWABANSHU,
YOU WILL
ALWAYS BE
IN DANGER.

YOU
MAY NEVER
SAY HOW
AOSHI
HAPPENED TO
TAKE YOU
IN, BUT...



AOSHI MUST
HAVE LEFT
YOU IN KYOTO
BECAUSE HE
KNEW THAT.



FOR
YOUR OWN
HAPPINESS.

IT'S BEST
TO HARDEN
YOUR HEART
AND FORGET
THEM.



響



WHAT
DO
YOU
KNOW
?!

WILL
YOU
QUIT
LECTUR-
ING
ME?!

アハハ

HOW DOES
FORGETTING
THE PERSON
I LOVE LEAD
TO HAPPINESS
...?!



SHE'S
GOING TO
JUMP...



-STOP!!
YOU
CAN'T...



"FORGET,"
YOU
SAY!

I'M
SEARCHING
BECAUSE
I CAN'T
FORGET!!







NO
DOUBT
ABOUT
IT...

...THIS
GUY IS
GOOD...



SOME-
HOW I
THINK...

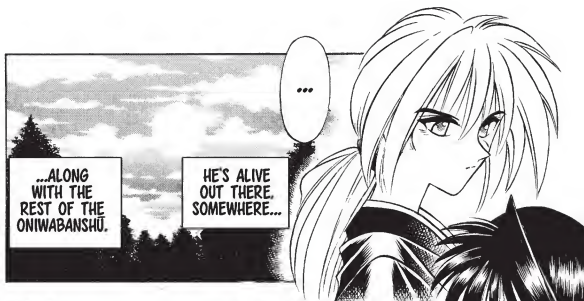
...HE DID
FIGHT
AOSHI-
SAMA.

BUT IT'S
ALL RIGHT.
AOSHI-SAMA
WOULD NEVER
LOSE TO
ANYONE.



OOOOOF!!





...ALONG
WITH THE
REST OF THE
ONIWABANSHU.

HE'S ALIVE
OUT THERE.
SOMEWHERE...



DID I
PASS
OUT...?

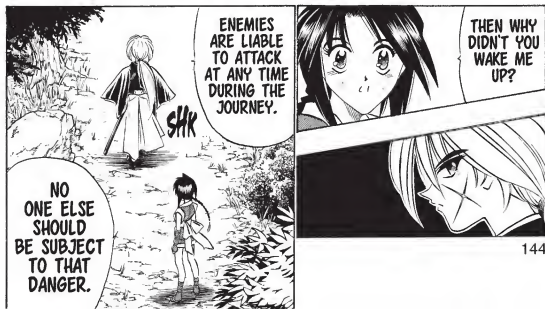
YOU'RE
AWAKE.

HUH...
HUH...
HUH?!

!

PLIP

YOU
DID.



ENEMIES
ARE LIABLE
TO ATTACK
AT ANY TIME
DURING THE
JOURNEY.

THEN WHY
DIDN'T YOU
WAKE ME
UP?

NO
ONE ELSE
SHOULD
BE SUBJECT
TO THAT
DANGER.

◀ READ THIS WAY ▶

NO HOPE
YOU CAN
BE TALKED
OUT OF
THIS, IS
THERE...?

IF YOU
MUST
FOLLOW,
KEEP YOUR
DISTANCE
AND ACT
LIKE A
STRANGER.



THESE
STUNTS
OF
YOURS...

IT'S
TIME
THEY
STOPPED.



...NOPE!

I WILL
SEE
AOSHI-SAMA
AGAIN, NO
MATTER
WHAT!!



The Secret Life of Characters (23)

—Makimachi Misao—

Kenshin and Kaoru are separated in the current storyline, so I created Misao to serve as the acting heroine.

Because the story's headed in a dark direction, I drew Misao to be as "bright" as possible. It's as though Yahiko + Kaoru / 2 = Misao.

Misao's a character I enjoy drawing, and has since become one of my favorites. Plot-wise, she's involved with the Oniwabanshū—an idea that came mainly from reader suggestions about an Oniwabanshū *kunoichi* (female ninja). I'd always planned to use that suggestion in the future... and then it turned out I needed a heroine. To keep the story from becoming more complicated, I decided that a girl who *wouldn't* develop feelings for Kenshin would be a good fit.

Misao will have a painful moment of reunion with Aoshi in the future, but still I want her to keep going strong. A lot of people gave me grief for basing her design on "Nakoruru" in "Samurai Spirits"... but I actually think she's closer to "Mai" or "Yuri" from a certain other battle-game by SNK. (Uh-oh, I'm digging my own grave at the bottom of the grave I just dug!) Guess that cloak I tossed in "just for fun" made a strong impression. As said in Volume 7, I'll try and refrain from doing that too much.

Her design was actually put together pretty quickly. I fussed with the Oniwabanshū ninja outfit a bit, and there it was. In the weekly (*Rurouni Kenshin*) installments, there's already been a minor change—the incorporation of color schemes from the SNK games. What do you think?

Face- and body-wise, Misao was meant to resemble a young man. She's 16, but I wanted her to look more like 13....We argued about the braid in the back, but ultimately decided to keep it, as it added emphasis to her movements.



Act 65

Each to His Own Path



THREE DAYS HAVE
PASSED SINCE KENSHIN
LEFT THE KAMIYA DOJO.
HE OUGHT TO HAVE
PASSED THE HALFWAY
POINT BY NOW, BUT...

HEY.
HIMURA.

HIMURA.

LET'S
EAT
SOON.

IT'S
ALREADY
NOON.



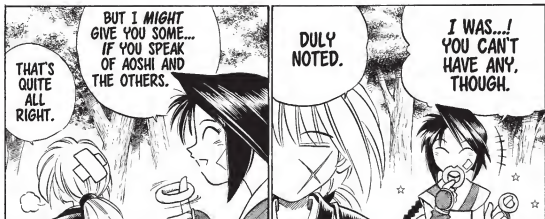
WAAAA

I
SA-A-AID
...

...HEY!

HEY.







IT'S JUST
DESTRUCTION.
NOT
TRAINING.

THIS IS
WRONG.



...BUT
NOW I'M
LOST IN SOME
MOUNTAINS.

AUGH.

ON TOP
OF THAT,
I WAS ON
THE NAKASEN
ROAD...

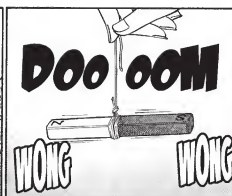
I'VE NEVER
REALLY
TRAINED
BEFORE...
I'VE NO
IDEA HOW.

THE FACT
IS, ALL
I'VE DONE
UP TILL
NOW IS
BRAWL.



AND
KYOTO'S
WEST...
SO-O-O...

NORTH
IS
THATA-
WAY...



Doo oom

WONG

WONG



WELL...
GETTING TO
KYOTO IS WHAT
MATTERS
NOW.

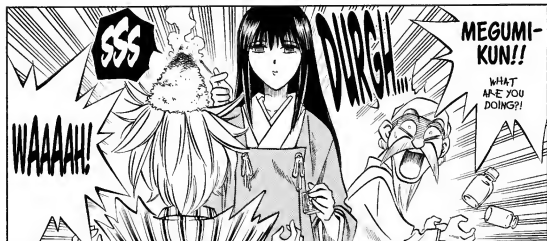
KSH



...HERE
I
COME!!

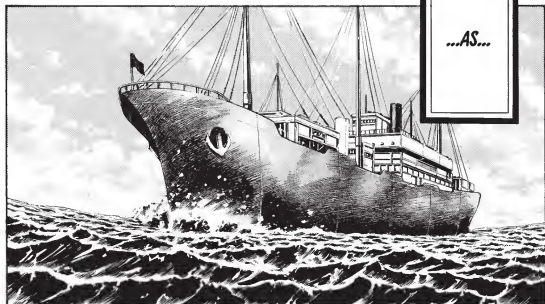
KYOTO
...

AS SANO
GETS
EVER
MORE
LOST...



NOTE: DOCTORS PRACTICED MOXIBUSTION BACK THEN





...AS...



PRETTY FRICKIN' FAR FROM OKAY...

...YOU OKAY, YAHIKO?



HOW COME YOU'RE DOING SO GOOD?

I NEVER KNEW SHIPS ROCKED SO MUCH...



...BUT I'M NOT ABOUT TO LET THAT STOP ME.

WELL, I'M A LITTLE SEASICK...



URGHAAAAH!

◀ READ
THIS
WAY ▶



WAAAAARG!



I'M NOT
GOING TO
WHINE
ANY
MORE.

...KAORU
GETS
HER
FEET
UNDER
HER...

...WHILE
YAHIKO
DOES
QUITE THE
OPPOSITE.

I'VE ALREADY
SULKED FOR
TWO DAYS...
AND WORRIED
YOU BOTH.



I MUST
BE STRONG!

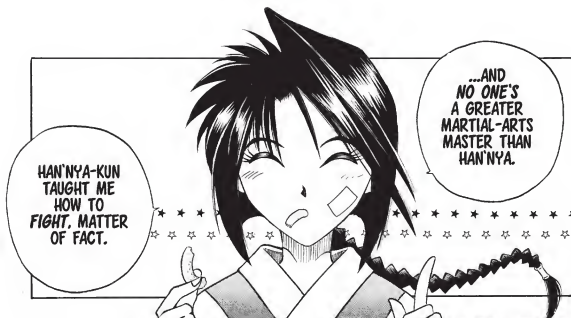
NO MORE
COMPLAINTS
OUT OF
ME.



...TO SEE
KENSIN
AGAIN...

STRONG
ENOUGH...







Let's talk about the TV anime some more! It may be common knowledge to those of you familiar with manga and anime, but Watsuki actually has very little to do with the anime production (he's too busy with the publishing). Further, due to differences in media, making the manga and anime completely identical would be impossible. As each has its own strength, though, so long as each version takes advantage of those strengths, we're doing okay, right? ...Well, nothing's going to get done with me going on like this. I'll just have to have faith in the professional pride of the anime staff. (That got kind of complicated. Put another way, Watsuki's all for the anime.)

Now, about this game, "Samurai Spirits Zankurō Musōken." I've yet to play it, but I do know "Hisame Shizumaru." Honestly, if the production staff of SNK wants to use "RuroKen" as a model because it's what they think is best for their product, I'm honored. I was pretty down about the letter concerning (my) "Misao" supposedly being influenced by [their game], so after seeing "Hisame," I felt I'd been reprieved. I do have to admit, it was worth a smile! See you next volume.



ON THE
OUTSIDE,
THOUGH, HE
SHOWS NOTHING
BUT THE
COURAGE...

...OF THE
ONIWABANSHŪ
ONMITSU.

HE'S
RESPONSIBLE,
KIND...

...AND
THINKS
ONLY OF HIS
COMRADES.

"...BUT
HE HAS
NEVER
SMILED."

"HE'LL SMIRK
WITH CONFIDENCE
BEFORE A
BATTLE TO
INTIMIDATE THE
ENEMY, OR TO
BOOST HIS
MEN'S MORALE..."



...THE
SAME
WAY
NOW.



HE'S
PROBABLY...

《READ
THIS
WAY》

ON HE
GOES...

—HEY!!

KSH

KSH

...THE
SMILE
HIDDEN
INSIDE
HIM.

SOMEDAY,
THOUGH,
I WILL
DRAW
OUT...

NO-O-O!
HE'S MORE
INTERESTED
IN THE
BUSHES!!
HE...

DID YOU
HEAR A
SINGLE WORD
I SAID?!

GR BOOOOH

WHY
WASTE
TIME
PUSHING
PLANTS
ASIDE?

HEY.

...BUT
TODAY
...

...HUH?

YESTERDAY HE
RAN THROUGH THE
FOREST WITH
EASE...



YOU
CAN
HAVE
THIS.

YOU
MUST
BE
HUNGRY,
HIMURA.

ZIP

...I'VE
CHANGED
MY
MIND.

DIG

ALL
RIGHT.
JUST
THE
ONE.

WHADDA
YOU
THINK
?!

HEY!

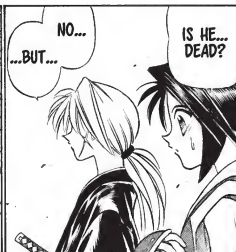
IT'S NOT...
SPIKED
WITH
TRUTH
SERUM.
IS IT?!

BUT
JUST
THE
ONE.

THE REST
ARE MINE.







READ
THIS
WAY



Rurouni Kenshin



Act 66—The Abandoned Village



PLEASE...

...SAVE
THEM...

...SAVE
THEM FROM
SHISHIO'S
MEN...

THE VILLAGE
IS NOT FAR
FROM NUMATSU
ON THE EAST
SEA ROAD...

...ONLY 20
PEOPLE OR
SO, HALF
FARMLAND
AND HALF
WOODS.

IT IS CALLED
SHINGETSU...
"NEW MOON."
IT WAS A
TYPICAL
VILLAGE...
UNTIL TWO
YEARS AGO.

Hy
oo
oo
oo

Act 66

The Abandoned Village



仲宏
和月





WHEN
WE
FOUND
HIM, HE
WAS...



...WHAT'S
GOING
ON?

COULD
YOU
TELL
US...



...DO
ABOUT
IT?

WHAT
WILL
TELLING
A
STRAN-
GER...



**CURSE
THEM!**

**CURSE
THEM!**



THIS ONE
HEADS
NOW FOR
KYOTO...

...TO
CONFRONT
SHISHIO.

...SHISHIO'S
HENCHMAN
SUDDENLY
APPEARED.

TWO
YEARS
AGO...

AFTER TWO YEARS,
THE POLICEMEN
STOPPED COMING...

...WHILE
MORE
OF
SHISHIO'S
MEN
ARRIVED.

WHEN
A NEW
POLICEMAN
CAME, HE
KILLED
HIM.

HE KILLED
THE
POLICEMAN
STATIONED
HERE AND
TOOK
COMMAND
OF THE
VILLAGE.

"...ABANDONED BY THE GOVERNMENT."

"SHIN-GETSU VILLAGE WAS..."



MAYBE THEY'RE PLANNING STRATEGIES.



"ABANDONED" IS A STRONG WORD.

LOOK! SHINGETSU VILLAGE HAS BEEN ERASED!!

IT'S THE LATEST MAP—BROUGHT BACK BY MY BROTHER FROM TOKYO!

THEN WHAT'S THIS?!





... "SENKAKU,"
THEY
CALL HIM!!

... BY THE
MAN WHO
COMMANDS
THIS
VILLAGE...
A SHISHIO
HENCHMAN...

MY BROTHER
SAW WHAT
WAS
HAPPENING.

HE
TRIED TO
GET OUR
FAMILY
OUT. AT
LEAST...

...AND
HE WAS
KILLED
FOR IT...

NOW
THAT MY
BROTHER
IS DEAD,
I HAVE
TO HELP
THEM!

MY
PARENTS
ARE STILL
IN THE
VILLAGE!

I
HAVE
TO GET
BACK...



...YOUR
STRENGTH.

LEND
ME...

CRUB



BROTHER
...



WHAT?!
BUT I
ALSO
WANNA—

MISAO-DONO,
PLEASE
TAKE CARE
OF THIS
BOY.



THIS ONE
GOES TO
THE
VILLAGE
ALONE.

...NO.



STAY
HERE AND
WAIT.



IN
YOUR
BROTHER'S
PLACE...

...THIS
ONE LENDS
YOU HIS
OWN
STRENGTH.

TP



IT IS LIKE
A GHOST
TOWN...



THERE'S BEEN
NO UPKEEP,
NOT FOR A
LONG TIME...



SHISHIO
IS STAYING
AT THE
VILLAGE
NOW.

I'VE NO
IDEA WHY.
BUT SENKAKU
OCCUPIES
OUR VILLAGE
FOR THAT
REASON
ALONE.

SHISHIO COMES
TO THE
VILLAGE FOR
ABOUT A
WEEK, ONCE
EVERY HALF-
YEAR.





...SO NOW
WOULD BE A
GOOD TIME
TO GET MOM
AND DAD
OUT!

SENKAKU
HAS GONE
TO THE
MANSION
TO
ENTERTAIN
HIM...

GNG!



I'M
ONIWABANSHŪ.
I CAN HELP
YOU MORE THAN
HE CAN.

HIMURA
TRIES
TO DO
EVERYTHING
HIMSELF.



NN!

SKRIK

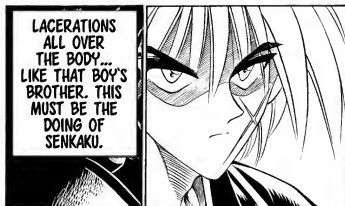
LOOK,
WOMAN,
WE'LL LOSE
HIM IF WE
DON'T GET
CLOSER.

...DUMMY.
HIMURA'S NOT
NORMAL. HE'LL
NOTICE IF WE
GET ANY
CLOSER.

KONG

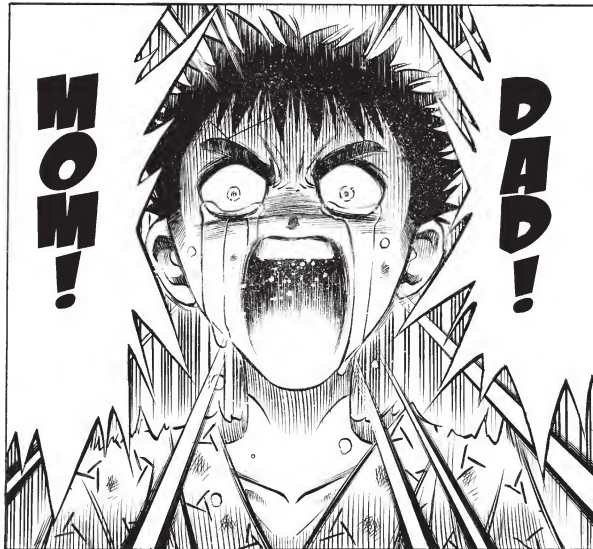


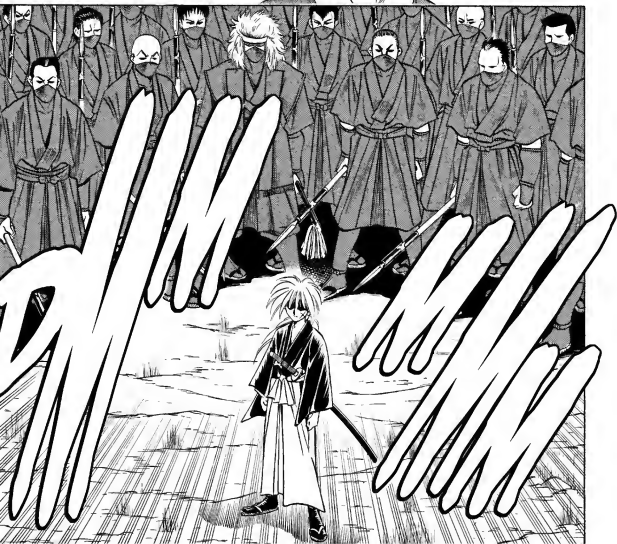
...EXECUTION.



LACERATIONS
ALL OVER
THE BODY...
LIKE THAT BOY'S
BROTHER. THIS
MUST BE THE
DOING OF
SENKAKU.









THEY WERE
EXECUTED
BY LORD
SENKAKU FOR THE
CRIME...



THEIR
SONS
PLOTTED TO
ESCAPE THE
VILLAGE.

WHY
DID YOU
KILL
THESE
PEOPLE?

...AS AN
EXAMPLE.

STRUNG
THEM
UP...

...ALTHOUGH
WE STRUNG
THEM UP
AFTER.

HEH



SHISHIO-
SAMA AND
SENKAKU-SAMA
HOLD THE
POWER OF
LIFE AND
DEATH HERE!!

LORD
SHISHIO TOOK
THIS VILLAGE
FROM THE
SWINISH
GOVERNMENT!

H!!

...INTRUDERS
MUST
DIE!!

AND, BY
SENKAKU-SAMA'S
ORDERS...

...YOURSELVES.

YOU
SHOULD
PREPARE...

PREPARE
YOUR-
SELF!

ISH



THIS
TIME,
THOUGH, IS
DIFFERENT.

NORMALLY,
THIS ONE WOULD
SAY, "STEP BACK
IF YOU DON'T
WANT TO BE
HURT."

THIS
TIME,
EVERY
LAST
ONE OF
YOU
GOES
DOWN!!



READ
THIS
WAY







GLOSSARY of the RESTORATION

A brief guide to select Japanese terms used in *Rurouni Kenshin*. Note that, both here and within the story itself, all names are Japanese style—i.e., last or “family” name first, with personal or “given” name following. This is both because *Kenshin* is a “period” story, as well as to decrease confusion—if we were to take the example of Kenshin’s sakabatō and “reverse” the format of the historically established assassin-name “Hitokiri Battōsai,” for example, it would make little sense to then call him “Battōsai Himura.”

Himura Kenshin

Kenshin’s “real” name, revealed to Kaoru only at her urging

Hiten Mitsurugi-ryū

Kenshin’s sword technique, used more for defense than offense. An “ancient style that pits one against many,” it requires exceptional speed and agility to master.

hitokiri

An assassin. Famous swordsmen of the period were sometimes thus known to adopt “professional” names—*Kawakami Gensai*, for example, was also known as “Hitokiri Gensai”

Ishin Shishi

Loyalist or pro-Imperialist *patriots* who fought to restore the Emperor to his ancient seat of power

Kamiya Kasshin-ryū

Sword-arts or *kenjutsu* school established by Kaoru’s father, who rejected the ethics of *Satsujin-ken* for *Katsujin-ken*

Kansatsu Tobikunai

“Piercing/Killing Flying Daggers”; Misao’s special technique

katana

Traditional Japanese longsword (curved, single-edge, worn cutting-edge up) of the samurai. Used primarily for slashing; can be wielded either one- or two-handed.

Bakumatsu

Final, chaotic days of the Tokugawa regime

-chan

Honorific. Can be used either as a diminutive (e.g., with a small child—“Little Hanako or Kentarō”), or with those who are grown, to indicate affection (“My dear...”)

dojo

Martial arts training hall

-dono

Honorific. Even more respectful than *-san*; the effect in modern-day Japanese conversation would be along the lines of “Milord So-and-So.” As used by Kenshin, it indicates both respect and humility.

Edo

Capital city of the *Tokugawa Bakufu*; renamed *Tokyo* (“Eastern Capital”) after the Meiji Restoration

Gatotsu

The signature attack of Saitō Hajime, series creator Watsuki reportedly based his (fictional) version on an actual, historical, horizontal (or “flat”) sword-technique.

Himura Battōsai

Swordsman of legendary skills and former assassin (*hitokiri*) of the *Ishin Shishi*

sakabatô

Reversed-edge sword (the dull edge on the side the sharp should be, and vice versa); carried by Kenshin as a symbol of his resolution never to kill again

-san

Honorific. Carries the meaning of "Mr.," "Ms.," "Miss," etc., but used more extensively in Japanese than its English equivalent (note that even an enemy may be addressed as "-san")

Satsujin-ken

"Swords that give death"; a style of swordsmanship rejected by Kaoru's father

Shinsengumi

"True to the old ways and risking their lives to preserve the old shôgunate system," the popular view of the Shinsengumi ("newly elected group") was that of swordsmen as charismatic as they were skilled. Of note: Thanks to the popularity of the NHK drama of the same name, several historical sites in Japan are reportedly enjoying record attendance levels of late.

shôgun

Feudal military ruler of Japan

shôgunate

See **Tokugawa Bakufu**

Tokugawa Bakufu

Military feudal government which dominated Japan from 1603 to 1867

Tokyo

The renaming of "**Edo**" to "**Tokyo**" is a marker of the start of the **Meiji Restoration**

Wolves of Mibu

Nickname for the **Shinsengumi**, so called because of the town (Mibu) where they were first stationed

Katsujin-ken

"Swords that give life"; the sword-arts style developed over ten years by Kaoru's father and founding principle of **Kamiya Kasshin-ryû**

Kawakami Gensai

Real-life, historical inspiration for the character of **Himura Kenshin**

-kun

Honorific. Used in the modern day among male students, or those who grew up together, but another usage—the one you're more likely to find in **Rurouni Kenshin**—is the "superior-to-inferior" form, intended as a way to emphasize a difference in status or rank, as well as to indicate familiarity or affection

kunoichi

Female ninja. In that they are not referred to as simply "**onmitsu**" (ninja), their special name suggests their relative scarcity

loyalists

Those who supported the return of the Emperor to power; **Ishin Shishi**

Meiji Restoration

1853-1868; culminated in the collapse of the **Tokugawa Bakufu** and the restoration of imperial rule. So called after Emperor Meiji, whose chosen name was written with the characters for "culture and enlightenment"

patriots

Another term for **Ishin Shishi**... and when used by Sano, not a flattering one

rurouni

Wanderer, vagabond

IN THE NEXT VOLUME...

Kenshin arrives in Kyoto and meets Shishio Makoto at last. Although the epic battle between them will have to wait, a glimpse of what lies in store for the new Japan should Shishio's mad ambitions come to pass is revealed. Kenshin's reversed-blade *sakabatô* broken, the question arises: Can it be reformed? *Should* it be reformed? Although Kenshin has abandoned the ways of the *hitokiri*, a new assassin has already taken his place—an assassin whose taste for blood and thirst for power is far greater than ever that of Kenshin....



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